

SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN

November
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IN PINNACLES NATIONAL MONUMENT

Martin Litton

Two Days in Ionian Basin

SEE PAGES 5, 6

People You Know

Another highly successful annual meeting was held by the San Francisco Bay Chapter at Bootjack Camp, Mt. Tamalpais State Park, on October 17. Chairman Robert P. Howell and a large, friendly group enjoyed a central commissary lunch, met executive committee candidates, and heard reports on the work and play of the chapter during the year.

Following the pattern set by last year's chapter meeting, when Dick Houston and other climbers of the California Himalaya Committee previewed their coming expedition to Makalu and exhibited Everest-type tents and climbing gear, the meeting this time featured personnel of the Bay Chapter's new River Touring Section, who displayed several of the folding boats with which they have begun to explore the waterways of California.

Barbara Tilden, editor of the *Yodeler* and enthusiastic river tourist, held the microphone for a brisk and entertaining series of interviews with the boatmen. Bruce Grant, chief of the section as well as chairman of the club's River Touring Committee, identified the craft

on exhibit: a Klepper double frame, "Aerius" type; a Hammer slalom single; two Hammer singles of the "Kuruz" (short) type, one with a rubberized hull, the other with a plastic hull, and a Hammer double fitted with sail, lee boards and—the latest thing—a wheeled cart for gentlemanly portage.

Others who explained the ins and outs of the damp new sport included Lou Elliott, Porter Baker, Phil Briggs and Elsa Bailey. Any estimate of the appeal of this kind of boating to Sierrans would have to take into account the throng of eager questioners who surrounded the craft and their owners at the close of the program. Sink or swim, river touring is quite evidently here to stay, and a lot of fun too.

THE COVER PICTURE: In Pinnacles National Monument, by Martin Litton. Nearly ready for publication by the Sierra Club is a new pamphlet guide to the Pinnacles, which describes the scenic features and scientific values of the monument, and tells in detail the area's climbing history and possibilities. Price will be 50 cents.

"Don't sell Pinnacles short," said Martin Litton when he sent us the picture. He was referring to the action of the Interior Department's Advisory Committee on Conservation, which in May placed this monument on a list of national park properties proposed for elimination from the system.

The Sierra Club has made a new study of Pinnacles National Monument, and opposes any change in its status. Frederick Law Olmsted has given his opinion that the monument "has enough of scenic interest to justify retaining it as part of the national parks system." Rock climbers especially prize the area, and others stress the importance of its unique geology and of complete protection against grazing because of the spectacular spring wildflower display.

Conservation Chairman John R. Barnard, who spent several days at the scene, comments: "The camps are clean, the trails are in good condition, and a fine educational program is carried on to acquaint visitors with all aspects of the area, geological, botanical, zoological and recreational."

One of the reasons for the club's position against a change, possibly to state jurisdiction, is the agitation for a road across the wild, spectacular northern part of the monument. Under state ownership, the pressure to build such a road through the wilderness would be more difficult to oppose.

THE SIERRA CLUB,* founded in 1892, has devoted itself to the study and protection of national scenic resources, particularly those of mountain regions. Participation is invited in the program to enjoy and preserve wilderness, wildlife, forests, and streams.

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Sierra Club Bulletin

VOLUME 39

NOVEMBER, 1954

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... TO EXPLORE, ENJOY, AND PROTECT THE NATURAL MOUNTAIN SCENE ...

New Chapter in Pacific Northwest

The Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Sierra Club was voted into existence by the directors at their meeting in Los Angeles on October 16. This far-flung subdivision initially includes members in Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Alaska, British Columbia and Alberta, and takes its place as the club's eleventh chapter.

An election will be held to adopt a version of the uniform by-laws for chapters; John Dyer is chairman of the new group's by-laws committee. Temporary officers will continue to serve until the election. They are: Pat Goldsworthy, chairman; Virgil Fischer, vice-chairman; and Polly Dyer, secretary.

Organization of a chapter in the Northwest is expected to assist materially in the club's conservation campaigns in that region, especially in Olympic and Mount Rainier National Parks. The goal will be full cooperation with other member groups in the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs and with all who seek to preserve the area's magnificent park and wilderness resources.

World Organization

Bettie Willard, who attended the recent meetings of the International Union for the Protection of Nature in Copenhagen as an observer for the Sierra Club, has written an enthusiastic report to Executive Director Dave Brower.

The Union, formed in 1948 at the suggestion of the United Nations and UNESCO, impressed our observer as "active, alert, and progressively working toward the commendable goal of a more widespread awareness and understanding of the problems of nature protection in the modern world." She

expressed the hope that, after reviewing the work of the IUPN and its future possibilities, the Sierra Club would join this world organization.

There are now nearly 200 members in the Union, representing both governments and private organizations. Some of the 20-odd U.S. members are: National Audubon Society, American Nature Association, National Wildlife Federation and The Wilderness Society. The next meeting will be a general assembly at Edinburgh in 1956.

Time for a Change?

The Sierra Club's "Hoover Commission" on reorganization has begun its studies, under the chairmanship of Honorary Vice-President Walter A. Starr. Other members of the survey group are: Joel H. Hildebrand, Francis P. Farquhar, Nathan Clark, Bill Henderson, Gene Wallar, John A. Linford, Elmer Aldrich and Robert Cutter.

In the background of President Richard M. Leonard's action in appointing a special committee on organization were discussions at the directors' meeting on May 1 and at the executive committee meeting on June 20. The basic question: Should any changes be made in the manner of selecting directors, in their tenure, and in the organization set up to govern the Sierra Club?

Although the club now has more than 9,000 members over a wide geographical area, as compared with the relatively small membership the present by-laws (last revised in 1922) were written to serve, it was emphasized that "we are not in a critical situation now, nor are we headed that way." The feeling of the directors was that, while

there is time for a deliberate study, it is wise to consider possible changes in the by-laws to provide "the most desirable form of government" for the future Sierra Club.

Among the numerous proposals that will be investigated by the Starr committee are:

1. Better information to the members regarding contemporary club leaders.

2. Staggered three-year terms for directors.

3. Regional associations of chapters.

4. Authorization for the Board to appoint two additional directors with special qualifications.

The committee will sample opinions throughout the club, and will hold meetings to discuss its findings and recommendations. Because of the magnitude of the task, a report is not expected until next year.

The Writer's Problem — It's Ours, Too

The Outdoor Writers Association of America is a valuable group of men and women who write for newspapers, magazines, radio and television, and of others who work in various ways to spread the good news of recreation in the open countryside. A great many of its members, of course, write in conventional style about hunting and fishing. Increasingly, however, the broader view of field, stream and wilderness conservation is taking hold.

Sierran Weldon F. Heald of Portal, Arizona, a successful writer who has long been a member of the OWAA, wrote a letter not long ago to the organization's president, J. Hammond Brown of Baltimore, Md., in which he urged recognition of such a broad view. Weldon said:

"The world is a mighty interesting place and I find a multitude of subjects in Nature that the big 'outdoor' magazines don't seem aware of and won't touch unless a hunting or fishing angle is introduced.

"At least they won't touch my stuff—to my great chagrin. In writing about the forests, mountains and deserts of the Far West I take my motto from California's famed naturalist and conservationist, John Muir: 'A thousand wonders are calling. Look up and down and round about you.' It is not necessary to be a hot-shot hunter or fisherman to be an outdoorsman—in fact, I find more and more that people are becoming interested in the outdoors and nature for its own sake."

Conservation Director Ernest Swift of Wisconsin used his bare knuckles in a fighting speech to an annual meeting of the Out-

door Writers Association, in which he said:

"During all the time it takes to placate the self-centered prima donnas and tub-thumping conservationists so they have some semblance of unity, they have been hopelessly outflanked and dry-gulched in the cross fire of greedy, cold-blooded realists. Up to the present time the so-called conservationists have done little more than engage in sporadic rearguard actions. They have no fierce unity of purpose because they are hopelessly divided into small disorganized schisms of narrow and oftentimes vindictive ideals. By and large, they lack comprehension of over-all resource values . . .

"If the forces of destruction fight with a naked knife, let us also fight with the knife. If we are to survive, the management of our resources must become a part of our everyday living, a personal and public obligation, as much of a necessity as the air we breathe. There is one solution and only one—educating the public to this obligation, and in particular, the future crop of citizens. . . .

"Some outdoor writers within my limited acquaintance have told me there is no sales appeal in stories on basic conservation. To this I heartily disagree, but I do admit that two factors are necessary to succeed. One, a fundamental appreciation of the subject; the other, the ability to write. Granting that a man who can sell copy has the latter ability, then he must lack the knowledge to make land management an interesting subject. The number one requirement is to have a thorough understanding of the subject; after that put it into a form-fitting sweater and people will show interest."



Eric Smith
runs last summer's adventures in a feature of more than Penolosa, and River knapsack artist's eyes. Ionian Basin the peak of

IN MID-JULY one of the two days to Ionian Basin is located just Kings Canyon its desolation. The climber Hoffman of Berkeley, Ed Robbins of at the upper Creek Canyon peaks the first Charybdis (Ionian Basin, and the Mt. Goddard our party at on the second



Two Days in the Ionian Basin

Eric Smith and three other young Sierrans last summer enjoyed one of those minor adventures in the mountains that have been a feature of club outings since they began more than half a century ago. Fernando Penolosa, another member of their Kings River knapsack party, looked on with his artist's eyes. Here are Eric's report on the Ionian Basin, and the way Pen saw it from the peak of Goddard.

IN MID-JULY this year a party of four left one of the club's knapsack outings for two days to explore the seldom visited Ionian Basin. The remote lake basin, which is located just south of Mt. Goddard in Kings Canyon National Park, is known for its desolation and rare beauty.

The climbing party, which included Ed Hoffman of San Mateo, John DeWitt of Berkeley, Eric Smith of La Mesa, and Ed Robbins of Berkeley, left the main group at the upper lake (10,237 feet) in Goddard Creek Canyon. Plans included climbing two peaks the first day, Scylla (12,939 feet) and Charybdis (13,091 feet), camping in Ionian Basin, and then continuing over the summit of Mt. Goddard (13,568 feet) and meeting our party at a new camp near Martha Lake on the second day.

We included in our packs only the bare essentials: cold foods, plenty of warm sleeping and wearing apparel, and camera equipment. There is no wood in the basin and we had no gasoline stove, so we were to depend largely on nuts, fruits and cereal foods.

We entered the Ionian Basin through a draw at the upper end of Goddard Creek Canyon, and almost 2,000 feet above it. This small entrance, just south of Mt. Goddard's southern buttress, proved to be a hanging valley. A large volume of water passed through it and a beautiful carpet of flowers paved our way. Once in the basin we veered south and made camp at a lake near the 12,000-foot level.

The basin we had entered looked more like the moon than the Sierra Nevada. There was a striking similarity between the black rock and snow-white bleakness and what you might expect to see on a lunar landscape.

After setting up camp, which meant dumping our packs and putting them under tarps, for rain protection, all of us climbed Scylla. From its summit we were able to gaze down into the Enchanted Gorge with its precipitous cliffs and Disappearing Creek far below. The gorge, which separates Ragged Spur from the Ionian Basin, has been viewed by few, but even fewer have

been lucky enough to explore its depths.

Upon our descent from Scylla we continued into the basin and made our way in the direction of Mt. Charybdis. This peak proved to be more difficult, not only in the ascent, but even in reaching its base. After traversing the basin, we dropped 1,200 feet to Chasm Lake, and two of us began the climb of the mountain itself. Ed Hoffman and John DeWitt remained in the basin.

At 6:30 p.m., Ed Robbins and I were only half way up the steep snow couloirs and shifting scree. Ed stopped within 500 feet of the top but I continued and reached the precipitous summit at about 7:00 p.m. I was surprised to find that I was only the fifteenth person to sign the register.

Our descent was made in short order by hurtling down the scree chutes and glissading over the snow slopes near the bottom. Ed was behind now, but I decided to go on so that John and I could continue to camp before dark. The two Eds would be along in no time, we thought.

John and I were back in camp very soon. The last rays of sunlight were just leaving the basin as we readied our meager dinner and awaited the others. After a long wait, about 9 o'clock we finally heard an answer to our yells; they were across the lake. The traverse around the lake proved too difficult in the dark and once more they disappeared. There was silence until 10:00 p.m. when they arrived in camp. They had lost their way in this barren waste, finding that every lake in the basin looked exactly alike.

After hearing their story we devoured the supper we had been saving. It consisted of half a loaf of pumpernickel, a can of roast beef spread, some jack cheese and a couple of handfuls of cashews. Since there was no fuel and we felt terrifically cold, we were driven to our sleeping bags and finished dinner in the sack.

On all sides as we tried to sleep were the luminescent snow and occasionally, to break the monotony, spots of coal-black rock. We found the surroundings weird, and all agreed that it was the loneliest place we had ever been in.

In the morning we again ate in the sack, emerging only after the sun had warmed up

Backpackers' Dream

An unusual knapsack trip to the Coast Range in British Columbia is among the possibilities being considered for the club's summer outing program in 1955. The size of the party would be limited because of sparse camping areas, and only veterans of club knapsack expeditions who meet the leader's requirements would be eligible.

Transportation from Vancouver, B.C., would be by seaplane. Backpacking would start from sea level, and the group would eventually ascend the 22-mile-long Franklin Glacier to the rugged and highly glaciated Mt. Waddington region, which is believed to resemble the Sierra as it looked during the extensive glaciation of the past.

Costs would be held to a minimum for this trip of approximately 12 days. Knapsackers who are interested should write to the Outing Committee.

the camp. The atmosphere was more cheerful by daylight. We were ready to go at 10:00; our next destination, Mt. Goddard.

Again we ran into trouble traversing the basin. It was necessary to make several difficult traverses around the numerous frozen lakes before we attained the eastern ridge. This ridge led us directly to Goddard's summit.

At the top we ate a belated lunch and enjoyed the vistas in every direction. It was an extremely clear day and every peak stood out distinctly. Darwin and Humphreys dominated the eastern sky, soaring to near 14,000 feet.

The descent from Mt. Goddard was easy except for a steep snow couloir on the north-eastern face. It took us more than three hours to get down this couloir, which proved to be a good 1,500 feet deep. It was very precipitous and we found it necessary to cut steps for safety. We finally joined Bob Braun and the main knapsack party below Martha Lake at 7:30.

Nothing could have been appreciated more than the warm food the cooks had ready for us. We were glad to be back, and there was a lot to discuss around the big campfire that evening. ERIC SMITH

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SIERRA RANGER. By Peter Thomson. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. 1954. \$2.50.

We recommend highly this story of the adventures of a rookie ranger in the high country of a Western national park. For teenagers especially, *Sierra Ranger* is a painless lesson in conservation principles and appreciation of our national parks. Through the exciting chapters of his story the author has woven fundamental lessons of watershed protection, predator control and ecological balance (and without using five-dollar words).

Accuracy in detail reveals that Mr. Thomson is no stranger to our national parks, and truly he is not. He has lived the life of a ranger in the high country, and many Sierrans will remember his father, Charles G. Thomson, who was superintendent of Yosemite National Park from 1929 to 1937.

Adults, too, will enjoy *Sierra Ranger* for they will warm to the story of a courageous young park ranger whose thought and actions so eloquently tell the conservation story.

—J. R. B.

Equipment Guide

To aid outdoor people in finding the best equipment for their needs, the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club published some time ago a booklet entitled "Hiking, Camping, Mountaineering and Trail-clearing Equipment," which gives information on all such equipment, where it can be found, and the prices. The PATC Equipment Committee examined and tested a large number and variety of articles, and recorded its findings. The eighth edition of this useful little buying guide has just been published, and may be obtained for 50 cents, from the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 1916 Sunderland Place, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Deadline for contributions to the 1955 annual magazine issue of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* is December 1, 1954. Send articles, reviews or photographs to the Editor at the club office.

Almanac

IN NORMANDY or Piedmont or the Schwarzwald, such a forest tract as the one that stretches all the way from the village past my house, and many miles down to the river, would never be permitted to lie so unprofitably idle. At this season of the year, when the forest floor is littered with thousands of twigs and branches and fallen nuts, this wood should be full of industrious children, collecting the branches into faggots, the nuts in sacks.

But I am eyed askance here when I go out with my children to gather patiently the twigs and break up fallen boughs. This appears as cheese-paring upon my part, a menial evidence that I have somehow acquired in my European years a low and foreign standard of living, reducing my children to the estate of peasants.

Now I know of no one who has all things better ordered for a truly high standard of living than a good peasant, who knows how to find the greatest possible satisfaction in an acre of black earth, a barrel of wine, an armful of wife, a big horse and a fine ripe wood lot. To all he gives back the gift of being needed, used, garnered and brought to appointed fruition.

But all about me I am presented with a people, blood of my blood and dear to me, who have no capacity to enjoy that which they have. In place of the forest turned to account without injury, I have the spectacle of my neighbors who burn off the woods every year from sheer incompetence to enjoy their blessings, from an innate hostility to Nature.

—DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE,
"November Twelfth" in
An Almanac for Moderns
(G. P. Putnam's Sons,
Copyright, 1935).

... I have never left my name on any mountain, rock, or tree in any wilderness I have explored or passed through, though I have spent ten years in the Sierra alone.

—JOHN MUIR, in a letter

Along Many Trails

IT WAS our privilege in the April SCB to join in announcing the \$1,000,000 Rockefeller gift to the Save-the-Redwoods League which assured the preservation as a state park of Calaveras South Grove. Many friends and contributors to the Calaveras acquisition funds have wished to visit the South Grove, which is four miles southeast of the present park in the North Grove, but across rugged terrain.

A recent report by Frederick A. Meyer, state forest technician, indicates that such visits are not possible at present. The trail formerly joining the two groves is no longer passable, he said; the bridge across the Stanislaus River was destroyed several years ago and has never been replaced. Fire hazards, and the dangers of sharing private roads with big logging trucks, were mentioned as reasons for restricting the area.

The South Grove, said Mr. Meyer, "is completely wild country," and there are no facilities of any type for the use of visitors. "The lengthy sequence of planning, budgeting and construction must be carried out before public use can be provided for."

It seems to us that Sierrans, whose wants are simple and easily provided for, may be able to tour the South Grove again before this lengthy sequence has been carried out and the wild country civilized. We hope to report soon on the possibilities.

AMONG THE GOOD things in the Summer 1954 issue of *The Living Wilderness*, published at Washington, D.C., by The Wilderness Society, is a map-illustrated article on "California's National Forest Wilderness." This is the third part of the magazine's comprehensive report on the wild and wilderness areas of the national forests, giving the facts and figures on each of the officially designated preserves, locating them and indicating their principal attractions. Washington and Oregon forest wilderness was described in the Autumn 1953 and Winter 1953-54 issues, and future numbers will

present similar information on areas in other states.

California's national forests have more wilderness areas than those in any other state, the national total of 79 areas, according to *The Living Wilderness*. California has 18, or more than 1½ million acres out of the 140 million acres set aside for such purposes in all national forests.

These names will conjure up dreams, and memories of aching feet and exhilaration among thousands of Sierrans: Agua Tibia; Caribou Peak; Cucamonga; Desolation Valley; Devil Canyon-Bear Canyon; Emigrant; High Sierra; Hoover; Marble Mountain; Middle Eel-Yolla Bolly; Mt. Dana-Minarets; Mount Trinity Alps; San Geronio; San Jacinto; San Rafael; South Warner; Thousand Lakes Valley; Ventana.

IN AN ARTICLE on "Human Conservation," the *Sport Fishing Institute Bulletin* quotes from *The Washington Post*:

"American children came out second to European youngsters in a physical fitness test. The American children, from urban and suburban communities, failed 78.3 per cent of the tests; the Europeans, from less industrialized regions of Italy and Austria, failed only 10 per cent.

According to the authors of the study, Europeans rated higher because they "do not have the benefit of a highly mechanized society . . . They must walk everywhere. Their recreation is largely based on the active use of their own bodies . . . Both home and school are faced with the need to get youngsters out of their seats and onto their feet."

As for adult Americans, the article takes issue with the wrong kind of speed—the hurry that races frantically and saves five minutes but then doesn't know what it saved the five minutes for.

Of course the *Institute Bulletin* knows something that will help—go fishing.

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